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THE wise men from the East worshipped Christ and gave him *gifts*. Worship and *giving* go hand in hand. Either one without the other is not acceptable to God.

WE have on hand some very interesting church news for next week. Some of it was crowded out of this issue, others came too late. Be patient, brethren, we will give more space to this department of the paper.

THE Missionary Convention at Waterloo will be held on Christmas day. What could be more appropriate? It is the anniversary of the greatest missionary whose labors have blest this sin-cursed earth. That ought to be an enthusiastic meeting, and we have every reason to believe that it will.

JUST as we go to press we find that a few Youth's Quarterlies were, by mistake, covered with Brethren covers, and of course sent out as Brethren Quarterlies. If you find any such among your literature, let us know at once and we will make it right, by sending you extra Brethren Quarterlies.

THE meeting at Roann by Brother Bauman closed with thirty-one accessions. This is surely an encouraging beginning for the young pastor of that church. He is an earnest, faithful gospel preacher, as the results of his work show. The report too is a model one, every sentence full of meaning.

THE Annual for 1898 contains a correct list of all the ministers of the church, a first class almanac, as good as any printed; it contains besides these interesting statistics, work among the Brethren churches, and a vast amount of other valuable information. It costs you but ten cents, or \$1.00 per dozen. Send in your order at once.

WHAT is the one thought that should engage us at this season of the year? Is it to have a good time at Christmas and New Year? Is it the thought of the presents we are likely to get? Surely not. The great thought that should engage the heart and mind of every member of the Christian church, is *the Christ*, the Christ of God, the Christ of history, the Christ of the Bible, the Christ in whom alone is salvation. Get all worldly thoughts out of your minds; get your hearts clear of all selfishness and foolishness, and let them be centered upon Christ.

#### MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

The meaning of Christmas who can tell? It is the anniversary of that day when God became man, when he humbled himself and took upon himself human flesh and became the representative of a sinful race, tho without sin himself. The Incarnation, what a world of meaning in that word! Great is

the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. And oh, what that manifestation means to sinful humanity. It means that God, the eternal God, came into this world, of sin and darkness, that he lived among men, talked with them, ate with them, identified himself with the lowliest of earth's inhabitants. What humiliation. Who can fathom the depths of it? Who can measure the distance from the throne of God to Bethlehem's manger? It is infinite; it is incomprehensible; the finite mind cannot grasp the full meaning of that condescension. But tho we can not comprehend its meaning, yet we can share its blessings. We do not understand the mysteries of the Incarnation, but we do enjoy the blessings that are ours by virtue of that amazing condescension. God became one of us. He came in the form of man that he might share with us our sorrows and joys. Our burdens are lighter because he came; our joys are sweeter because he lived; our love is richer and purer, because he gave himself for us. With the coming of Jesus into the world have come light, new hopes, the forgiveness of sins, peace and joy unspeakable. But the greater joys, the richer things of the new life, the spiritual life, are yet in store for the faithful follower of the blessed Christ.

#### LOOKING BACK

Looking back is dangerous. We are exhorted to remember Lot's wife, who as a result of that dangerous act, looking back, was turned into a pillar of salt. But there is such a thing as a profitable looking back, especially at this season of the year. It is well to take a retrospective view that we may profit by our mistakes. The past teaches its lessons, and when we take a backward look with a view of profiting by our own experiences and the experiences of others, we do no violence to the command, "Remember Lot's wife." If as individuals we can profit by looking back, may not the church also take a backward look and profit by the act. The following from the *Reformed Church Messenger* teaches an important lesson, and if the reader will substitute Brethren church for Reformed church, he will find here a subject for fruitful meditation. If we mistake not we have left just such opportunities slip during the fifteen years of our organization. Witness our educational and publishing interests and our missionary enterprises:

The Reformed church has before her a great future if she lays hold of her present great opportunities. Now is the time to take up every point open to us, and establish churches wherever we find a sufficient number of our people ready to go into an organization. We have lost a great deal in the past. Hundreds of points have been allowed to pass into other hands. From New Eng-

land to the Carolinas we should now have churches by hundreds and thousands. Why we do not is easily understood when we are told that during the first quarter of the present century at one time one hundred and twenty churches and preaching points called for men and received none. Had these points been laid hold of who can tell into what they might have grown by this time? All this is sincerely regretted now by those who are deeply interested in the church. But we read all this history to little purpose if we go on to make the same mistake. And that is just what we are in danger of doing now. Attention is here called to the failures of the past only to warn against similar ones in the present day, and to stir up the church to take advantage of her present opportunities.

#### MORE EFFICIENT WORK

Aside from the Christian church itself there is no more powerful agency for good in all this land than the Sabbath-school. Of all the organizations associated or connected with the church the Sabbath-school is the most important. Whatever may be said of the various societies of young people and other organizations, nearest to the heart of the church, stands the Sabbath-school. The relative importance of the Sabbath-school as a religious organization and an auxiliary to the church has not yet been fully recognized. Much as the school has accomplished during all the years of its existence it is yet far from having attained the possible. We recognize the Sabbath school as a very potent factor in the religious training of the young, but with proper equipments much more could be accomplished. In many schools there is very imperfect teaching, in fact erroneous teaching; teachers give very little attention to the preparation of the lesson, the school is poorly organized and on the whole the work is done very imperfectly. Yet the influence seems to be for good. What could not the Sabbath-school accomplish with well qualified teachers, perfect organization and well directed efforts? The great possibilities of the school are yet in the future.

#### THE FIVE HUNDRED

The 500 list has not been growing quite as rapidly since the advance in price, yet it is going up, and we are still hopeful that the 500 may be reached. The paper will make a very appropriate Christmas or New Year's present to some one. There are but few more required to reach the coveted number, and we trust our friends will not relax their efforts until we can write, "Total 500."

E. E. Haskins,	10	G. Hoover,	2
S. P. Fogle,	2	J. S. Ober,	1
William Mason,	1	E. C. M. Grazier,	2
Samuel Snapp,	1	Total,	23
C. Forney,	1	Previously reported,	407
Guilford Leslie,	2	Total to date,	430
L. O. Hubbard,	1		